



Defence**F**ocus

Royal Navy | Army | Royal Air Force | Ministry of Defence | ISSUE #273 **AUGUST/13**

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Exclusive interview
with the new Chief of
the Defence Staff



**MEMORIES
OF WAR** p5
WWI centenary
approaches

A dramatic landscape at sunset with soldiers and a satellite dish. The scene is set in a rugged, hilly area with a large satellite dish on the right. Two soldiers in the foreground are looking at a device, while another soldier stands in the distance. The sky is filled with dark, heavy clouds, and a bright sun is setting on the horizon, creating a golden glow. A lightning bolt is visible in the sky on the right. Two orange arrows originate from the text: one points from 'up there' to a satellite in the sky, and the other points from 'down here' to the soldiers on the ground.

We ensure global reach
from **up there**

to ensure smooth passage
down here

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TATTOO P22



Regulars

P6 BIG PICTURE

Winning entry from the Royal Navy photographic competition

P28 HEALTHY HOLIDAY ESSENTIALS

Everything from sunblock to safe sex

P30 PUZZLES

Your monthly crossword, chess and Sudoku conundrum

P31 READERS OFFERS

An overnight stay in the Cotswolds is up for grabs that you could win, win, win

P18 VITAL ROLE OF REHAB

How sport's restorative qualities help amputees on the road to recovery

P20 THE HISTORY BOYS

Enter the world of Service historians providing vital lessons for the future

Features

P5 FIRST WORLD WAR

MOD unveils its plans to commemorate the sacrifice of the fallen

P8 GENERALLY SPEAKING

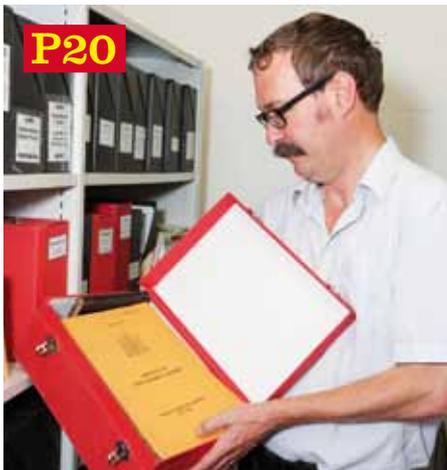
Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nicholas Houghton on his mission

P10 FLEET COMMAND OPERATIONS

Insight into how Europe's busiest Navy sweats its assets, all in a day's work

P12 TYPHOON

Ten years of Typhoon – RAF marks another milestone for the famous jet



EDITOR'S NOTE

DefenceFocus

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FIONA SIMPSON



They say that it's tough at the top. I wouldn't know. In my lowly position as editor of *Defence Focus*, I don't see myself as more than a small (albeit squeaky) cog in the giant wheel of Defence.

This month we hear from a top cog, new Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir Nicholas Houghton. He shares his priorities with us; and what will be on the top of his agenda as he takes on the task of leading the nation's Armed Forces. But you'll be pleased to know that he plans to be "honest, straight talking and supportive", which will hopefully help the machine to run smoothly even in a times of austerity and change.

Another 'top cog' who Focus has been speaking to this month is Chief

of Defence Personnel, General Andrew Gregory. There's certainly a lot on his plate at the moment with the recent announcement about the Reserve Forces and all the challenges meeting those targets will bring. There's also the New Employment Model consultation, which will touch the lives of all Service personnel.

Outside of all that serious top of the office chat, there's time for a party as we wish happy 10th birthday to the Typhoon, with a handy Typhoon timeline to look back (and forward) to the aircraft's decade in service. Some people who know all about timelines and pretty much everything that has ever happened in MOD are the Armed Forces historians. They have been collecting the lessons learned from Army history to inform what we do in the now.

As you read on you can maybe have a think about how your own cog will fit in to the machine of Ministry of Defence history.

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LEST WE FORGET

ONE YEAR TO GO UNTIL THE CENTENARY OF THE START OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

On 4 August 1914, Britain declared war on Germany and entered the First World War. It began four years of some of the bloodiest warfare the world had ever witnessed, with 16 million deaths and 20 million wounded.

Next year marks the 100th anniversary of the conflict and will see a series of remembrance events and commemorations take place across Europe.

With one year to go to the commemorations, the government has announced help for communities to restore First World War memorials up and down the country. A new website will be created to help people get funding and support to get the memorials in tip-top condition in time for the 100th anniversary of the armistice in November 2018.

Victoria Cross recipients will also be at the heart of the plans, with commemorative paving stones laid in the UK home towns of those awarded the



VC for valour 'in the face of the enemy'. The stones will provide communities a lasting legacy of their local heroes and help younger residents understand how their area fitted into the story of the First World War.

There will also be a national competition to design the paving stones which will be presented to councils in the areas where those Victoria Cross recipients were born. 



MAJOR EDWARD MANNOCK

■ Born 1889
Ballincollig, UK



In March 1917, Major Mannock qualified as a pilot and was posted to No. 40 Squadron in France. Mannock made an instant bad impression by making socialist speeches in the officers' mess. During his amazing career, Major Edward Mannock accounted for at least 61 downed German aircraft in just over a year. In July 1918, he set out with a new pilot, Lieutenant Inglis, and soon shot down a German plane. As he followed it down, he was strafed by German ground fire and his left wing fell off, spiralling him out of control and crashing in flames. Neither his body nor a grave have ever been found.

Little was known of his impressive record at the time. It took much lobbying by those who had served with him for Mannock to receive a posthumous VC.

CAPTAIN NOEL GODFREY CHAVASSE

■ Born November 1884
Oxford UK



In 1914, Captain Noel Chavasse was a regimental doctor for the 10th Battalion, The King's Regiment. On 9 August 1916, at the Somme, the men of his battalion were mown down by heavy shell and machine-gun fire. Despite great danger Captain Chavasse combed the battlefield for wounded all that night and throughout the next day and night, saving more than 20 lives. For his courageous determination, he received the Victoria Cross.

On 31 July 1917, Chavasse's medical station was 500m behind the line in Passendale, Belgium. Despite a shell fragment cracking his skull he carried on, ignoring thirst and exhaustion. On 2 August, a shell penetrated his medical station, and shrapnel ripped open his abdomen. He died of his wounds on 4 August. A month later he was awarded a second VC, one of only three people to achieve this honour.

BIG PICTURE

Picture: P0(Phot) Sean Clee

**A DAWN RAID BY LIMA
COMPANY 42 COMMANDO
ROYAL MARINES. THIS IMAGE,
TAKEN DURING EXERCISE
BLACK ALLIGATOR, WAS ONE
OF THE WINNERS OF THE
ROYAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPHIC
COMPETITION.**





STEPPING UP

WITH PLANS FOR A POST-AFGHANISTAN FOCUS AND CHANGES IN THE WAY THE DEPARTMENT BEHAVES, THE NEW CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF HAS A CLEAR VISION FOR MOD. REPORT BY LEIGH HAMILTON

Taking up the mantle of Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) must be a rather daunting prospect. With responsibility for all three Services and the delivery of national security objectives weighing heavily on your shoulders, it takes a certain type of person to take on that challenge.

Earlier this year it was announced that General Sir Nicholas Houghton, then Vice Chief of the Defence Staff (VCDS), would replace General Sir David Richards when he stepped down as CDS. General Houghton has been in post for a matter of weeks, but already has very clear plans on how he wants to leave his mark on Defence. "Defence has quite rightly focused on Afghanistan in recent years but getting back to a contingent posture that offers genuine political choices for the dangerous and uncertain world we face is now a clear priority."

The General has an impressive military CV. He commanded the Belfast Brigade in Northern Ireland at the time of the Good Friday Agreement. As Director of Military Operations, he helped deal with the aftermath of 9/11, including the start of operations in Afghanistan. He was Chief of Joint Operations in 2006 when UK forces began operations in southern Afghanistan, and for the drawdown of UK forces in Iraq. During his time as VCDS, General Houghton was central to implementing the outcomes of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review and was the sole military member of Lord Levene's Defence Reform team.

With this depth of experience, the new CDS is well armed for the challenges he will face in this role. He takes over in the midst of a huge programme of Armed Forces restructuring and wider government cuts, but is keen to point out the positives. "People say 'never miss the opportunity to exploit a crisis' and in many respects that's true for us today. Delivering defence in a period of austerity concentrates the mind on where genuine efficiencies lie, and it provides the catalyst for reforms which were long overdue."

General Houghton points to changes in procurement and the imperative to recover the majority of the Armed Forces back to the UK as examples of where we will benefit from looking at things differently. "I think the whole of Defence feels the impact of national austerity but this can liberate our thinking about more efficient and effective ways of doing business."

As well as internal restructuring, there are still



**Chief of the Defence Staff,
General Sir Nicholas Houghton**

Picture: Harland Quarrington

significant operational challenges in Afghanistan. General Houghton believes the long term success of the mission is yet to be determined. "While everything we've invested in Afghanistan in terms of blood and treasure and effort over the past 12 years has helped transform the security situation, the enduring outcome for Afghanistan still sits in the balance."

For General Houghton, the outcome in Afghanistan no longer relies primarily on the military but on the political situation. "There are two important things in this context: the first will be successful elections next year and the democratic appointment of a successor to

President Karzai. Alongside that is the potential start of a successful reconciliation process, where the parties to the conflict find a way to resolve that conflict. With these two things in place, rather than handing over an ongoing security challenge – with which Afghan forces will nevertheless be able to cope – we could leave Afghanistan with the realistic prospect of stability and prosperity.”

With drawdown in Afghanistan already underway, will our next theatre of operations be Syria, as reported by several media sources? “As it stands, no decisions have been made on our involvement in Syria. It is, nevertheless, the duty of the Ministry of Defence to provide options for the use of military force in scenarios such as Syria and military advice on the utility of those options.”

If not Syria, how do the Armed Forces prepare for an uncertain operational future? CDS is clear this will require a change of mindset. “It is in many ways easier to focus on a single operation than having to plan for a whole range of contingencies. You can never have the same degree of sophistication in capability terms when you adopt a more generic contingency posture. We have to recalibrate our expectation of the level of capabilities we can field on new operations from a standing start. We’ve got to get back into an ‘expeditionary mindset’ where we will not have perfect capability for every scenario.”

Another very prominent challenge faced by Defence at the moment is recruiting for the Reserve Forces. General Houghton explained that once MOD has fine-tuned the proposition being offered, recruiting should be easier. “The biggest challenge is implementing the Reserve Forces proposition so that it sensibly balances the needs of the individual reservist and their family, the tolerances of their employer and the demands of the Services. If we can deliver that proposition then the challenge of recruiting, for example 30,000 reservists for the Army Reserve, should, by historic standards, be a relatively easy one.”

Manning levels and restructuring are hot topics in Defence at the moment. Although we are at the beginning of what could be a mammoth journey, General Houghton believes it’s well within our ability to make it through. “We are in the early days of implementing restructuring. We have made all the big decisions. We’ve laid out all the plans. But there is still an awful lot to do.” He gives the examples of reducing manpower levels, building infrastructure and the Army’s successful return from Germany.

General Houghton explained that reducing manning by cutting personnel, while at the same time maintaining recruiting to the regular force, is the only way to keep the manning structure healthy. “The Armed Forces are what is called a ‘bottom-fed’ organisation. If you were to suddenly stop recruiting you would create generational gaps at the younger end of the Armed Forces and we would suffer the effects of these gaps for many years.”

It is these big changes facing Defence that lead General Houghton to question the way in which the upper echelons communicate to Defence as a whole. “I plan to be honest, straight-talking and supportive. I think there’s a significant amount of scope for better internal and external communication of Defence.

We do not spend enough time talking to our internal community. They need to understand the context and relevance of what they’re doing in circumstances and times that are quite difficult for many of them.”

Internal communications are something that General Houghton has particularly strong feelings about. He believes we might not always have communicated with the Armed Forces in the best way and is determined to overcome that legacy. “I think we’ve risked people becoming cynical and detached from what Defence is trying to do. With transformation for example, this should be more than just communicating a message, we should be doing it in a way that makes everyone feel on side with what is going on, believes in it and can see the part they need to play.”

With Defence Transformation still a work in progress, General Houghton believes the more we get military and civilian staff to recognise the need for change and support the decisions being made, the better the outcome will be. “One of the challenges we still have to overcome if we’re going to aspire to the Levene agenda is in the cultural and behavioural practices in MOD Head Office. Head Office by design has got to be smaller and more strategic and therefore we’re going to have to adopt new behaviours. Currently we are guilty of creating bureaucracy, people checking up on others and holding people to account unnecessarily. In big transformational change programmes, it is always behavioural and cultural issues that are the most challenging to eventually get right.”

With more than a few things on his plate, General Houghton is entering his new role with his eyes wide open to the challenges he’ll have to face. “I don’t think any of this is beyond the wit of man to get right. But the combination of making manpower reductions, keeping our people motivated, maintaining the right skillsets in the right places, and continuing to prosecute operations and run the day-to-day business of Defence is a huge challenge.” **DP**



General Houghton took over from General Sir David Richards in July

Picture: Harland Quarrington



EURO STARS

IAN CARR WENT ALONGSIDE FLEET COMMAND OPERATIONS TO HEAR HOW THE BUSIEST NAVY IN EUROPE SWEATS ITS ASSETS

Winding up the weekly Commander's Update Briefing (the CUB) at Northwood HQ, Commander Operations, Rear Admiral Matt Parr, gave the attendees a good talking to. Good in that, having heard all the reports via video link from his heads of sheds around the world, about the issues to be mindful of, the problems that needed solving, the Admiral wanted to hand out pats on the back for all that was being achieved.

"We beat ourselves up, but we

must remember the huge amount we are wringing out of the Fleet," he said. "I was in France talking to my French counterpart recently and he couldn't believe the amount we do."

It was a fair point considering that in comparison to some of our European friends who have similar sized budgets and navies, the activity of the RN, the numbers of days spent at sea and the workload is impressive.

Attending a CUB leaves you certain of two things; Firstly whatever problems arise, this network of professionals will

pull together and prevail. Secondly, that the taxpayer can be assured that the Fleet is sweating its assets to deliver maximum value for money.

Perhaps there is one more lesson, that the maritime machinery is a delicate balance where everything depends on everything else. A maintenance overrun can mean a late sailing, which could lead to a delay in a ship's relief, cutting into the sailing time for that vessel to take up her next duty.

So protecting our nation's interests – let's not forget that UK-based shipping contributes £10bn a year to GDP and almost £3bn to tax revenues – doesn't leave the operations' chief plate spinner, Captain Mike Walliker, with a lot of wriggle room.

As Rear Admiral Parr's operations deputy, it is his job to draw together all the strands that will ensure that the



Today HMS Iron Duke and HMS Richmond came together for a Photex. The two ships were at sea in some horrendous weather for some great photo opportunities.

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford

Fleet's programme of commitments happens, and, with a favourable wind, will do so on time.

"That's how I spend a large part of my day, trying to maximise our flexibility, dealing with the defect that comes out of nowhere, a compassionate leave for a critical member of a ship's company, finding a suitable replacement.

"There's always a second, third or fourth order of consequence. If you have a ship in refit minus a particular expert because they have had to go aboard a ship on the front line, yes that means I have kept my end of the bargain, keeping a ship at sea, but I'm mindful that the ship in refit may come out late.

"After all, we are a taut Navy, pull a string at this end and you will feel it at the other. There's little slack in the middle."

Yet, of course, it's not quite as clear cut as that sounds. The structure of

the Navy as a result of the last defence review is an organisation set up to do all those jobs that are deemed essential, such as protecting home waters. But it's also one which must also be able to do those additional tasks that operating in a contingent environment might demand such as providing off shore support during the Libyan campaign.

"The Fleet is fully capable of protecting our security interests worldwide," said Captain Walliker. "We maintain a permanent destroyer or frigate presence in priority regions such as the Gulf, Indian Ocean and South Atlantic as well as in home waters, and we regularly send destroyers or frigates to other areas such as the Caribbean and the Far East.

"We are continuing to invest heavily in new destroyers and frigates for the Navy. By early next year the sixth and final Type 45 destroyer will have entered service. Then, the first of the new Type 26 Global Combat ships will join the Fleet as soon as possible after 2020."

To get all that work done means that in general, ships are expected to operate at a tempo of 80:20 on deployment, which means in any period of 100 days, 80 are expected to be at sea. Although for some RN hulls that tempo would be a breeze. For example the fishery patrol vessels are well and truly sweated, each ship spending well over 300 days a year around the UK's coastal waters, coming alongside just long enough for the crews to hand over.

Famously, Admiral Lord Nelson was always calling for more frigates, which Task Force Commander wouldn't sympathise with that? There are enough frigates in the Fleet to do what is currently being asked of them. But they are fully committed, protecting the deterrent, conducting UK patrols and operating in the Gulf and other parts of the world. Coordinating their activities is crucial. Captain Walliker must deliver all that, and factor in periods for maintenance and upgrade. On top of that, he must bear in mind that HMS Collingwood has a requirement for a frigate for a number of weeks each year to train Principal Warfare Officers (PWO) and Navigators.

"There's a certain amount of shore-based synthetic training that can be done these days, but in the end you do need a hull to help them to understand the job that they are going to be asked to do," said Captain Walliker. "Ten years ago I could have allocated a frigate to do just that, and she would have had no other duty."

Now the PWO's basic phase sea week is conducted on board a Type 23 that is holding a committed duty. "If something

happened that required the duty towed array or the Fleet escort to be activated, the PWO's would have to disembark and the training programme would be interrupted."

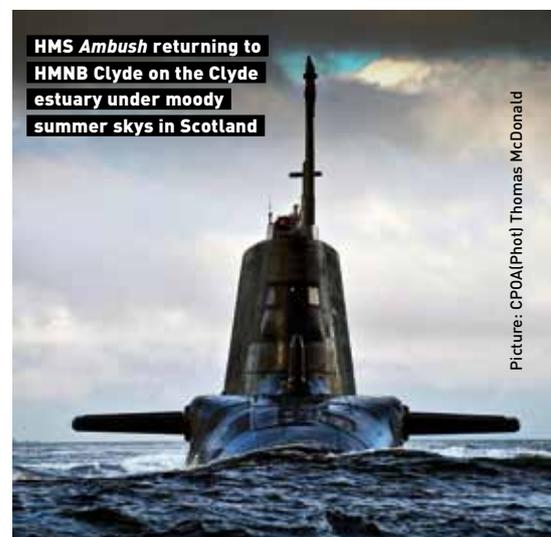
But getting a frigate to the party in time is no good if it's not wearing the right frock. It has to be the right ship for the job, and with the right ship's company on board.

These skills and more will be tested in this year's Cougar deployment. From mid August to December, elements of the Response Force Task Group will be put through their paces and the Navy's prowess at dealing with major events thousands of miles from home displayed.

In terms of the deployment of ships and the commitment of personnel including the Royal Marines, it is as Captain Walliker understates, "significant". But this too has been carefully staged within the context of commitment. "We are deploying via the eastern Mediterranean east of Suez, clearly quite close to potential trouble spots, so if the government wanted, we could respond.

"If you asked me where a certain ship was going to be on 17 November for example, under the current planning I could tell you. But it is a task group that is scaled and trained for contingent operations. So if there is a need either in that area, or en route along the coast of West Africa, the task force commander could send off one or two ships if directed by ministers to focus on something. That's the beauty of this sort of deployment."

Synergy, the business community say, is all about the whole being greater than the sum of its parts. But if you want to get a gallon, never mind a quart out of a pint pot, that's all in a day's work for the Royal Navy. **DP**



HMS Ambush returning to HMNB Clyde on the Clyde estuary under moody summer skys in Scotland

Picture: CPOA(Phot) Thomas McDonald

An aerial image of two Typhoon multi-role aircraft from 17 Sqn in flight above the clouds.

AS THE RAF CELEBRATES 10 YEARS OF THE TYPHOON WE LOOK AT ITS ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR AND WHAT LIES AHEAD IN FUTURE

TYPHOON AT 10

TYPHOON – THE STORY SO FAR...

1972

■ RAF issues revised AST-403 specification to replace the Jaguar fleet.

1994

■ 27 March - Maiden flight of first development aircraft, DA1 from DASA at Manching, Germany.

2003

■ 13 February - First Series Production Aircraft, GT001 flies from Manching.
■ 30 June - "Type Acceptance" signed, marking formal delivery of aircraft to the RAF.

2005

■ 21 December - Saudi Arabia agrees a purchase of an unspecified number of Typhoons with the UK MOD.

2007

■ 29 March - XI Squadron officially stood-up as a Typhoon Squadron at RAF Coningsby and becomes the first multi-role Typhoon Squadron.

2009

■ September 2009 - four Typhoons replace the Tornados of 1435 Flight at Mount Pleasant in the Falkland Islands.

1986

■ June - Eurofighter GmbH established.

2000

■ 23 July - "Typhoon" name officially adopted as in-service name by four partner nations.

2004

■ 27 June - Two RAF Typhoon T1s depart UK for Singapore for marketing and training.
■ 15 December - UK confirms purchase of second batch of 89 aircraft.

2006

■ 31 March - first operational RAF Typhoon squadron, No. 3, formed, RAF Coningsby.
■ 9 October - No. 11 squadron, receives first aircraft.

2008

■ 16 January - The first Tranche 2 Typhoon makes its first flight.
■ 1 July - RAF Typhoons declared operational in the air-to-ground role.

2010

■ 6 September - Number 6 Squadron, the first Typhoon squadron in Scotland, officially stood up at RAF Leuchars.

The first Typhoon aircraft – known until 1998 as the Eurofighter – were delivered to the partner nations, including the UK, in August 2003. It was an overdue arrival of a system that had a somewhat troubled gestation requiring international cooperation. But good things come to those who wait, and in the last 10 years the platform has more than proved its worth as the stalwart of British air defence in the Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) role as well as on operations over Libya as part of Operation Ellamy.

Wing Commander Roger Elliott, SO1 Operations and Capability, Typhoon Force Headquarters at RAF Coningsby, explained what it has brought to the RAF:

“The key benefit of Typhoon is its multi-role capability. It can conduct one mission – i.e. Control of the Air mission and then switch role to a ground attack mission or in certain circumstances do both at the same time. An example of this is Libya where the first thing that happened following the Tornado Storm Shadow strikes was that we forward deployed Typhoon to contribute to establishing the no-fly zone. Once control of the air had been established we switched into the attack role alongside Tornado to provide protection for Libyan civilians on the ground.”

From entry into service in 2003 it was

designed to carry air-to-air missiles, so that was its primary role. Then, from 2008, the RAF began to integrate air-to-ground, or air to surface munitions – specifically the Enhanced Paveway II. Since then it has also been given 27mm FAP (Frangible Armor Piercing) ammunition to give a further air-to-surface attack capability.

The Typhoon force is not yet complete and a 5th front line squadron will be stood up by April 2015 to bring the fleet to its maximum complement of 160 aircraft before the first of the tranche 1 aircraft go out of service in 2016.

Over the next decade, several enhancements are planned beginning with the integration of Paveway IV bombs to be in service from 2015 and Meteor air-to-air missiles from 2018. Storm Shadow and Brimstone air-to-ground missiles are scheduled to be in service from the end of 2018 and 2020 respectively.

“The key for Typhoon is continuing that spiral development of capabilities,” said Wing Commander Elliott. He added that such cutting edge development also means Typhoon squadrons are never short of applicants to fly, maintain and support the aircraft.

“It really offers the chance for people to work at the top end of the Air Force’s technological development and it gives all of our people the chance to work with new

technologies and to work with our allies.

“With older less capable platforms we don’t work with our allies as much at the cutting edge as we do with Typhoon. For example, we regularly take part in exercises with the USAF’s F-22 Raptor. The chance to work with the best aircraft of other nations also gives both pilots and technicians the opportunities for further training and development.”

So, after 10 years, what does Wing Commander Elliott think has been Typhoon’s greatest achievement so far?

“I think Typhoon really came of age in Libya as part of Operation Ellamy,” he says. “The ability to deploy aircraft to the south of Italy within 36 hours of the notice to go and be delivering air policing missions within 24 hours of leaving RAF Coningsby is definitely its finest hour – for both the platform and its people.”

As Tornado begins to be withdrawn from service and the RAF looks ahead to fielding the next generation of combat aircraft, Lightning II, Wing Commander Elliott says there are exciting times ahead. He is very much looking forward to the next decade and more of Typhoon operations: “As the RAF awaits SDSR 2015, it does so with a clear path ahead for its fighter force, both Typhoon and Lightning II. Together these aircraft are a potent force for the decades ahead.” 

AND WHAT’S IN STORE...

2011

■ 20 March - 10 Typhoons are deployed to southern Italy for OP Ellamy where it serves with distinction as a multi-role platform.

2013

■ 28th January - 1(F) Sqn Takes delivery of 100th Typhoon to enter RAF service
 ■ April - 6 Squadron dropped inert Paveway II bombs from a Tranche 2 Typhoon aircraft for the first time.

2012

■ 15 September - No 1 (Fighter) Squadron (1 (F) Sqn) re-formed at RAF Leuchars as the RAF’s 4th Front line Typhoon squadron, becoming the second Typhoon unit based in Scotland.

2015

■ April - Fifth front line Typhoon squadron scheduled to be stood up

2014

■ January - first Tranche 3 aircraft set to be delivered to the RAF

2017

■ Meteor initial testing

2016

■ First Tranche 1 planes to retire from service

2020

■ Brimstone in service

2018

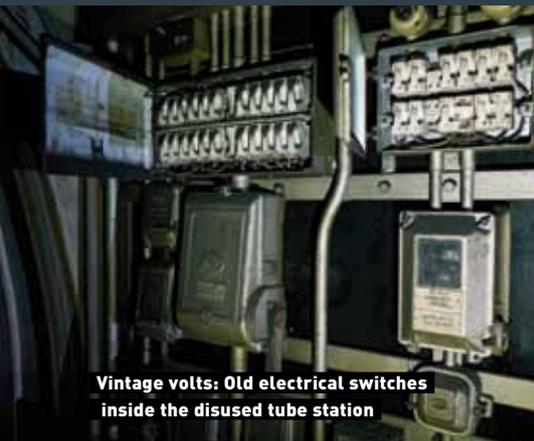
■ Meteor in service
 ■ Storm Shadow in service

2030

■ Predicted out-of-service date for Typhoon

2021

■ AESA (Active Electronic Scanned Array Radar) expected to reach full capability



Vintage volts: Old electrical switches inside the disused tube station



Changing stations: the building, designed by architect Leslie Green, sports semicircular windows and oxblood red tiles



Bright sparks: only Royal Engineers electricians were allowed behind here

INSIDE MOD'S TUBE STATION

AS THE PROPERTY GOES UP FOR SALE, WE TAKE A FINAL LOOK INSIDE MOD'S HISTORIC BROMPTON ROAD SITE

This month, MOD announced that it will be selling one of its central London sites at 206 Brompton Road, after the 107-year old property was declared surplus to military requirements.

Brompton Road station opened on 15 December 1906. However, it proved to be too close to Knightsbridge and South Kensington stations so it closed its doors to commuters less than 30 years later, on 30 July 1934.

Just before the Second World War, the building, together with the lift shafts and lower western passages, were sold to the War Office for use by the British Army's Air Defence Formation, The 1st Anti-Aircraft Division. During the war, the station became the Royal Artillery's Anti-Aircraft Operations Room for central London who stayed in the building until the 1950s.

The site – of around 28,000 square feet – is currently occupied by the London University Air Squadron, the London University Royal Naval Unit and 46F Squadron Air Training Corps (Air Cadets), all of which will be found alternative accommodation before the sale.

The prime real estate is located next to the Grade II* listed Brompton Oratory,

Brompton Square, and is just metres away from Harrods.

Facilities at the property include a drill hall, garages, offices and mess, but the site also includes below-ground areas previously used as part of the former Brompton Road underground station.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), which is responsible for the management and maintenance of MOD land and property, has appointed London-based property agents Jones Lang LaSalle to manage the sale.

John Taylor, Estates Surveyor for DIO, said: "The MOD keeps the size and location of its bases under constant review to ensure the Defence estate is no larger than necessary to meet operational needs and provides value for money for the taxpayer."

He confirmed that that the property at Brompton Road has been declared surplus by MOD and that DIO will work with Jones Lang LaSalle to find a buyer for the site.

Simon Hodson, Residential Land Director at Jones Lang LaSalle, said: "This well-located, prime central London site provides an excellent redevelopment opportunity and we are

expecting a high level of interest from a variety of purchasers when we bring this to the market in September." **DF**



A huge anti aircraft operations map for central London remains in a liftwell

Pictures: Shell Daruwala

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“I BELIEVE I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE”

GENERAL ANDREW GREGORY ON DELEGATION, RESERVES, MILITARY LIFE AND CIVIL SERVANTS’ BATTERED IMAGE

DF: What does your organisation Chief of Defence Personnel (CDP) do?

AG: My current organisation is focused on regular and reserve military personnel policy; pay, pensions, allowances and welfare. From April 2014 I will also take responsibility for civil servants’ personnel policy. We have a hugely talented workforce and need to look at how we manage, support and develop our talent across all parts of MOD.

DF: Tell us briefly what is your vision?

AG: We should be looking at all people as part of the ‘Whole Force’ concept; military – both Regulars and Reserves, civil servants, other civilians and contractors, to create the most appropriate mix of people to support Defence. We’ve always had those people but I don’t think we truly valued them as an integrated workforce. I worry, to be brutally honest, that the media or public don’t value civil servants; they are absolutely critical to the delivery of Defence’s outputs.

DF: No surprise that the press love to hate ‘pen pushers’, but can you change that perception?

AG: It will be a challenge. While it’s terrific that the public value military personnel and respect their achievements in Iraq, Afghanistan and supporting the London Games, they see civil servants as bureaucrats, grabbing bonuses without delivering results. They also fail to understand that we can’t deliver Defence without our civil servants. I can try to promote better understanding of our organisation so that people are appreciated for the important roles they play. I’ll give it my very best shot because I believe it, and I’m prepared to put myself on the line to promote all people in Defence.

DF: What’s your assessment of morale across the Armed Forces?

AG: I think morale among Service personnel is as good as can be expected but uncertainty does exist and we must continue to tackle that. People remain concerned about job security and military redundancy tranches; these have undermined confidence about a long-term career in the organisation. I also think that changes to terms and conditions worry people; pensions have been an issue. A critical factor in my role is maintaining the trust of people. Communications are vital so that we tell people like it is, even if it is ‘I don’t know the answer but this is what I’m doing’. People respect honesty because it increases confidence and certainty; uncertainty undermines trust, which affects morale.



CDP: Lieutenant General Andrew Gregory

Picture: Harland Quarrington

DF: When you visit troops, is there a danger of ivory tower syndrome when people are on their best behaviour?

AG: I always find you can’t put words in people’s mouths and, if you open up a conversation, they will tell you like it is. Last week, I was in Portsmouth and the Royal Navy personnel did not hold back! It was very helpful; they talked of the pressures, especially tempo, separation, and how the unpredictability of life affects them and their families. The challenge for all of us is to get out of Main Building and meet Defence personnel and military families on a regular basis.

DF: Why does the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) matter and does it lead to changes?

AG: Both the AFCAS and the ‘Your Say’ survey for civilians are important tools because they give us a feel for trends in the workforce. Yes, they do affect decisions by providing evidence of how people feel. This evidence is placed alongside other sources

of information such as the work of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body. They conduct a series of focus groups and interviews, pick up views, and then report back independently to Parliament.

DF: The impact of military life on families tops most gripes in the survey. How will you tackle that?

AG: The top issue on leavers' surveys are instability, inability to buy a home and inability for spouses or partners to hold down a stable career. The New Employment Model programme is the biggest ever review of military terms and conditions of service, covering career structures, pay, pensions, allowances, accommodation and training and education. It aims to provide agility, attractiveness and affordability, not least through offering choice. Choice is critical if we are to attract and retain quality people in the Services. It will allow them to take ownership of their lives whilst still meeting the Services' needs. It is supported by the Armed Forces Covenant, an initiative that is producing real tangible value in terms of wider support to military personnel and their families – a big plus.

DF: Critics argue that the New Employment Model programme is a cost-cutting exercise. Your take?

AG: No, it's not, and the Defence Board have clearly stated that. Inevitably we live in an age of austerity so, if we have aspirations to increase provision in one area, we need to look at where that resource will come from. In doing so we must seek to meet the expectations of 21st century families and personnel within the budget. We're currently in a consultation phase and I urge people to get online and give us their views (see <http://bit.ly/17ZWtaU>).

DF: So if a junior serviceman earns £22k a year, how can you help him on the property ladder?

AG: There are some specific initiatives we are looking at within the Armed Forces to help people build a house deposit. The Chancellor's recent budget statement announced various help-to-buy initiatives, a shared equity and mortgage guarantee scheme, which are open to all. Without overburdening them with debt, we need to educate them about both opportunities and also in the realities of financial planning. This will create a structure that enables people to meet their aspirations and get on the property ladder.

DF: The Reserve Forces are set to grow to almost 35,000 by 2020. That's a tough target, is it doable?

AG: Yes. This is achievable, particularly when you consider that 20 years ago we had 75,000 in the then TA. That puts a total of 35,000 across Defence into perspective. I'm responsible for the overall programme. Now that the Secretary of State has published the white paper 'Reserves in the Future Force 2020', which contains a clear statement on the package for the reservist and their employer, we can communicate the totality of what is on offer. That will support the increase in numbers.

DF: What's the biggest challenge – signing up volunteers or getting their employers onside?

AG: Volunteers need to come with the support of their



“ I always find that you can't put words in people's mouths ”

employers. We have got better at communicating our plans so that employers know who their reservists are and when we might wish to mobilise them. Every reservist will gain from the experience of their Service; this will benefit their wider life and civilian career.

DF: Is enough being done to recruit ethnic minorities into the Armed Forces to mirror the population?

AG: In Defence we should seek to ensure that the military and civilian workforce reflects society. That will help society better understand us, feel engaged with Defence, and hence support us. There are a range of issues in this area, one of which is ethnic minority recruiting. I hesitate to call them work strands because life is not as simple as pigeon-holing people! We need to look at our policies to make sure that they allow individuals to maximise their potential and that all sections of society see us as a workforce that values and promotes talent.

DF: What are the high and low points of your job?

AG: There aren't any lows. I feel very fortunate to have this responsibility. I believe I can make a difference and I believe it matters. That's what motivates me.

DF: How would you sum up your leadership style?

AG: I believe passionately in the Army's core values that I've followed for over 30 years: courage, loyalty, integrity, discipline, selfless commitment and respect for others. I hope others will agree that my leadership style is based on those. **DF**

TAKING IT TO THE LIMIT

SPORT'S ROLE IN THE RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION OF INJURED SERVICE PERSONNEL SHOULDN'T BE UNDERESTIMATED. REPORT BY LEIGH HAMILTON

Picture: Getty Images

It is well known that regular exercise can help us maintain a healthy mind and body, but the role of sport for injured Service personnel can be life-changing.

After their NHS care, many wounded or sick Armed Forces personnel go to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court and into the Defence Recovery Capability to work towards recovering as quickly as possible. Through Headley Court and Personnel Recovery Centres, personnel can become involved with Battle Back, a Ministry of Defence-led initiative in partnership with and funded by the Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes.

Battle Back encourages wounded, injured or sick personnel from all three Services to participate in adaptive sport and adventurous training as part of their rehabilitation process and beyond. As well as opportunities across the country, there is also the Battle Back Centre in Lilleshall, run in partnership with the Royal British Legion, that organises a range of courses and sports.

For many, taking up sport can transform their recovery and their outlook. Having goals, training hard and competing can give them a new lease of life.

Martin Colclough is Head of Physical Development at Help for Heroes and is the charity's lead on the Battle Back programme. He explains that the role that sport plays in an injured Service person's recovery shouldn't be underestimated: "When someone becomes wounded or sick, a lot of the choices they previously made for themselves are taken away from them as part of the medical process. Where sport can come in is when you start to take control and start to make some choices yourself. Sport from that perspective can be very empowering or transformational.

"If you were physically active before there's no reason that you can't be



Picture: SA Images

Lieutenant Kirsty Wallace recently competed in the Wheelchair Basketball European Championships

physically active again. A phrase that some of the guys use that I think is quite powerful is 'doing sport makes me feel more like me again', so that connection to their pre-injured or pre-ill state is quite important because it kind of normalises things."

Private Scott Meenagh of 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment stepped on an IED while on patrol in Afghanistan. He lost both of his legs above the knee and suffered extensive internal injuries. Enduring this turned his life upside down: "I felt at the top of my game, I felt fitter, stronger, more focused than everyone else. You feel capable of absolutely anything in the world and in a heartbeat you're the most disabled you could physically be. Before I joined the Army I was very sport-orientated; I played

rugby for Scotland's under 18s. I felt I was only on the planet for two reasons: to join the Paras and to be a rugby player. When I got wounded I just didn't have a clue what to do."

With a tremendous amount of work and astounding levels of determination, Scott focused on getting involved in sports which would put him on a level playing field with able-bodied sportspeople. "Since being wounded I have tried an enormous amount of sports, from water skiing to horseriding, from ice hockey to skiing and scuba diving. At the moment I'm doing a lot of rowing. I've been really lucky to have tried all these sports and I think while Battle Back helps introduce you to these sports it also helps you gain an understanding of how far you can push your body again, how able you can be."



Private Scott Meenagh's involvement with horses has helped his recovery

With rowing his focus at the moment, Scott trains every day for hours on end to reach his end goal of competing and being able to judge his ability. "I'm training hard because I love it. I'm well and feeling in good shape and I'm looking forward to competing. I don't think I'll have an understanding of where I am on the ladder until I've competed at a decent level. I'll just go with the wind and see where I end up."

Sport is clearly the main driver for Scott; as well as rowing, he rides and trains horses for HorseBack UK and is taking a diploma in natural horsemanship. He sees kayaking as his main summer sport and skiing as his winter sport. "Sport has changed my life completely. Sport has always been one of my biggest things in life and since being wounded sport has made me realise anything is possible. I don't even consider myself as disabled anymore because of sport. You put me in a kayak, you put me on a ski, put me up a mountain, put me in a boat, and I can match most able-bodied people. It gives you that sense of ability again."

Royal Navy Lieutenant Kirsty Wallace also turned to sport after she fell from a height and dislocated two of her vertebrae, which left her temporarily paralysed from the waist down. After rehabilitation at Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth and a spell at Headley Court, Kirsty was

able to walk down the aisle at her wedding in May 2011.

She also rekindled her love for sport and, through Battle Back, was invited to a Paralympic taster day where she was able to try several different sports to see if they suited her. "I tried wheelchair basketball and fortunately it was being hosted by one of the GB coaches who could see that I was obviously quite motivated, athletic and keen to learn. He spotted me and asked me to join a couple of clubs on the south coast near where we live. Then six weeks later I was invited to my first GB training camp."

Competition success came quickly for Kirsty: "I had my debut as a selected member in 2011 when I competed at the Paralympic World Cup in Manchester. We beat the Germans, the Canadians and the Japanese and managed to win the competition. The team's first gold."

As with Scott, Kirsty is being judged by the same rules as able-bodied sportspeople are. The net heights and the courts are exactly the same as regular basketball. "The court is the same, the baskets are the same and the balls are the same. You play for the same amount of time. Most of the rules are the same apart from a few exceptions. In able-bodied basketball a lot of the power that you generate to shoot the ball or pass the ball comes from your legs, from the big muscle groups. Of course, we're strapped to our

chairs so we have to generate all that movement purely with our arms and our core muscles."

The transformation that sport can have on your life can help to heal mental as well as physical wounds. Martin Colclough says: "You come out of this dark place where you thought your life had changed in a bad way forever, but actually it becomes a very positive and empowering experience and you experience this process of growth post injury and actually feel like a better person and feel like you have more rather than less to contribute to your own development and society as a whole. It's really, really powerful."

Scott believes recovery involves grabbing every opportunity that is available: "You have to be able to stand up, take a chance and be able to push yourself out of your comfort zone and it will help you progress in all manners; mentally, physically, whether it's walking on prosthetics, whether it's skiing down a mountain. It will empower you to make you a stronger person."

Kirsty agrees and believes that any injured member of the Armed Forces can have a bright future if they put their mind to it: "Your life isn't over. It's not the end. It just means readjusting and, while some doors might close, others open, and they can be far better than you ever thought they would be." 

Soldiers on a Find, Feel and Understand operation in the vicinity of Patrol Base Said Abdul.

IAN CARR TAKES A LOOK AT THE WORLD OF MOD HISTORIANS

ON THE RECORD

“What’s the Navy for?” John Nott asked his First Sea Lord when he was limbering up for his, some say infamous, 1981 Defence Review. “It’s obvious!” was the perhaps unhelpful reply. What impact that short discussion had on the outcome is for the historians to debate. Historians like those in the single Service historical branches in fact, especially as we steam towards another Strategic Defence and Security Review. Except, rather than debate it, they provide their Service staff with the historical context of previous reviews to influence how they might argue their cases this time around.

“It’s about giving advice about arguments and tactics that have been used in the past,” said Simon Marsh, Head of Information Strategy, Policy and Practice, who also happens to be the head of profession for the cadre of roughly 30 historians and analysts. “We can help to identify the situations within the context of the time and compare and contrast.”

Each historic branch reports ultimately to its own chief of staff. The Air Force Branch is located at RAF Northholt, and the Navy’s is at Portsmouth. But for historic reasons, which could constitute a small research project in itself, the Army branch, which is the youngest of the three, is located at MOD Main Building within the Chief Information Officer’s team. As well as delivering Service-specific tasks, it also tends to pick up Department of State issues. “For example we provided the background information for issues around the Kurt Waldheim case [the former UN secretary who was exposed as having been complicit with Nazi war crimes],” said Simon.

A large part of the branches’ work is running the single Service operational record-keeping systems. “For every unit or squadron that deploys on operations, or ship that goes on patrol, every month they have to provide an operational record return to their historical branch and that provides the essential source

material on which those branches work,” said Simon. And, as you might guess, there is a huge amount of it. Patrol reports, maps, photographs, radio logs, nominal roles, are just some of the items swelling the archive shelves. Nowadays, the material tends to be in digital form, which means that information such as spreadsheets, PowerPoint presentations or even a DVD of gun camera footage from an Apache helicopter can be added to the mix.

“We work closely with the ops branch in Land Command, so the chain of command can tell the troops what we need and why” said Simon. “It’s easy to see why, in a war fighting situation, the last thing a battle group wants to do is keep records. But we are not asking them to produce new information, we are only asking for the material they would produce anyway. If they have fired rounds for example they have to account for how many were fired and at what target.” Using all this information, the historians produce official narratives, impartial

descriptions of what has happened based on the facts. And when a public enquiry hits the in-tray, demanding an investigation, it is this body of raw information which proves to be so vital.

"The Army historical branch in particular gets heavily involved in legal work, for example we provided a lot of information for the Baha Musa enquiry.

"Using the source material, there is evidence of what every battle group did in Iraq between 2003 and 2009. When we get claims from Iraqis who say they have suffered at the hands of the British we can help to verify or refute that claim," said Simon.

For the historians who dig through the documents in search of the truth, it is fascinating work. "We are all anoraks," said Martin Whittle who specialises on the Iraq campaign while his colleague Guy Harrison concentrates on Afghanistan, "I'm live op," says Guy, "while I think of Martin as post-op" he jokes.

When faced with finding out what really went on in response to a legal claim, the historians are often the only people who have had the chance to match all the documents together. "You are building a picture, putting together the notes from the medivac team with the notes of the soldiers on the ground and any other relevant material. Sometimes it can be difficult to stop reading, especially if it is an account of a fire fight. But knowing that you have provided the plain facts that will influence a decision is immensely satisfying," said Guy.

The historians are often called on to provide what they call decision support. "If someone has a query or wants to draw some lessons from a particular activity, then we have the source material and we know where to look. In 2009, when we were withdrawing from Iraq we were tasked to look at previous war diaries from when we had withdrawn from other Middle Eastern countries. At the beginning of Telic we provided some products about Iraq, its history, some of the issues that might be important seen from an Iraqi perspective. We did the same for Afghanistan."

Deep in the bowels of Main Building, moving among the stacks, Martin Whittle pulls out a historic document dating back to the Second World War. "Sometimes we get asked about new brigade structures, have they been tried before? Or it could be a question like, have we been in this situation before, what did we do and did it work?"

Guy has another example. Fort



Picture: PO Phot Derek (Des) Wade

Halstead were doing some work looking at how protective mobility could be developed, so they asked him to research the records to see if there were lessons that could be learned from a range of situations. "Having information like this can really make a difference to troops today, so it's important that people understand when we ask them to keep records, it's not just a process, it matters."

The historic branches have a very diverse range of customer calling on their time. Some are regular returners; some have a very specific demand who disappear when the issue has been

sorted out. "We helped Personnel when they were looking at the policies that had governed World War One executions for cowardice when there were calls to pardon these people," said Simon. "There was a high demand for the historical background, but once we had done that and helped them come to their conclusion, that was all they needed from us."

But Simon is keen to draw everyone's attention to the historians, and the support they can give. "I'd say we can all learn from history, and history reminds us that we can, so make use of us." **DF**



Picture: PO Phot Derek (Des) Wade



Picture: Mark Owens, Army HQ Scotland

EDINBURGH EXTRAVAGANZA

MILITARY MAESTROS ARE ONCE AGAIN STEALING THE SHOW AT THIS YEAR'S ROYAL EDINBURGH TATTOO

This year's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo takes place from 2 to 24 August. The programme includes all the famed music, action and colour, featuring performers from all over the world including Europe, the Far East, and Central and South America.

Against the world famous backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, the 2013 Tattoo showcases the awe-inspiring Massed Pipes and Drums and Massed Military Bands as well as a talented motorcycle display team, dancers and the haunting lament of the Lone Piper.

From its early days, the Tattoo has been a huge international hit. Performers from more than 40 countries have presented there, and this year, 220,000 people are expected to attend the event on the Castle

esplanade to witness another landmark performance in the show's 60 year history. The international flavour has been deliberately developed to entertain a cosmopolitan fanbase that is estimated to draw a worldwide TV audience of 100 million viewers.

This year's Tattoo opens with a scene simulating a volcanic lava flow, apt, given that Edinburgh Castle is built on top of a volcano. Then an opening fanfare sounds as Highland pipers, followed by The Band of the Irish Guards, The Band and Bugles of The Rifles, and The Band of the Royal Logistics Corps and Corps of Drums march onto the esplanade. They are then joined by some of the very best pipers and drummers from around the world, as the Black Watch, 3rd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland, The 1st Battalion Scots

Guards, The 1st Royal Tank Regiment, 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment, The Wallace Pipes and Drums Malta, and The Royal Guard of Oman Pipe Band take to the arena. The talents of the Tattoo Highland Dancers are exhibited in their interpretation of the beginning of time to 'The Rhythm of Life'.

Major Stevie Small, Director of Army Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming in Edinburgh defined the extraordinary appeal of the Tattoo.

"It's the biggest oldest Tattoo in the world and it's the one that every other Tattoo in the world tries to emulate. The sight of Edinburgh Castle is the pilgrimage that every piper in the world wants to make. Once you've done it, you just want to do it again and again and the feeling of pride never diminishes."

Major Small describes the accomplishment among the military musicians as "good as any in civvy street" and he knows that that the highly coveted pipe major certificate reflects the ultimate in musicianship and historical knowledge. He believes that the military musicians are "custodians of a proud tradition". Although not all the musicians are Tattoo regulars, Major Small says that even for experienced performers, nothing comes close to the highly charged atmosphere of Edinburgh.

"We've got 8,000 people in the cauldron of Edinburgh Castle and it doesn't matter how battle hardened musicians might be to audiences. It is always significantly bigger and better at Edinburgh.

"The audience come to have fun and be entertained. They appreciate the standard of drill and musicianship is top level so they're not disappointed."

Lance Sergeant Robert McCutcheon took up the drums when he was just seven years old. Now, 21 years later he's a dab hand. Trained at the Army School of Bagpipe Music and Highland Drumming in Edinburgh, the drummers play marches, jigs and everything inbetween. Away from the Tattoo, Lance Sergeant McCutcheon is based with 1 Scots Guards in Catterick Garrison, but he says that performing is a "real honour."

McCutcheon is appearing in his sixth Tattoo but he bats away any suggestion that it gets repetitious.

"No way!" he grins. "It changes every year with the different bands and music so it's always exciting to find out what's new and meet up with the other regimental pipes and drums. It gives me a rare chance to get together with my own band and play every day, which doesn't happen often with the current climate in the Army."

With "Natural Scotland" as its principal theme, this year's Tattoo also highlights Scotland's reputation as a "wonderful world". Providing the show's climax, Bands of The Irish Guards, The Royal Logistic Corps and The Rifles join the Massed Military Bands against back projections of indigenous flora and fauna. The sequence culminates in a Parade of Animals introducing – on selected nights, life-sized horse puppet Joey (pictured) from the award-winning production of War Horse.

The finale, featuring the entire cast, goes stratospheric. With NASA imagery and fireworks, spectators are launched into the solar system and leave humbled knowing that our small blue planet is only a tiny participant in a vast greater scheme of things.

For an instant, Edinburgh Castle basks in a sunset glow as the light gently dims to embrace the Evening

Hymn followed by the Lone Piper playing the Scottish soldier's traditional call to the end of the day, this year performing 'The Reflections of Panmunjom'.

The solo spots of the Lone Piper are shared between Lance Sergeant Alec Gordon, Scots Guards and Pipe Major Jason Sumner, Royal Tank Regiment, following a fiercely contested audition process.

"The Lone Piper's spot is one of the main pillars of the show and their responsibility to deliver the performance is huge," says Major Small.

"You've got to get to the end of the tune and there is no scope for error. You're looking down on the esplanade below. You can see all the performers on the parade ground. You think you're prepared and you've got your pipes ready and know the tune but when you start to play, the spotlight hits you in the face and suddenly it's the loneliest place in the world."

Lance Sergeant Alec Gordon will perform a lament to the fallen. He says: "It's a great privilege. Ever since I've performed at the Tattoo, it's been a dream to be the Lone Piper. To stand alone at the top of the Castle playing the tune is very special."

LSgt Gordon has rehearsed for months but is a tad nervous, because, for his solo spot, he'll be perched on a raised platform held up by scaffolding. No mean feat given his fear of heights! Performing at his 10th Tattoo, he said: "I've still got that same excitement with the hairs standing up on the back of my neck. It always feels like my first one and is definitely a career highlight." 



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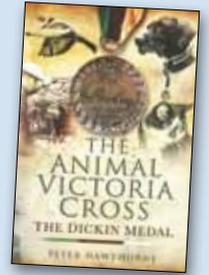
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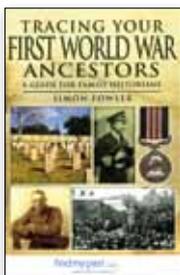
The Dickin Medal

By Peter Hawthorne
Pen and Sword, £16.99



If this book doesn't bring a solitary tear to your eye it's because you have a heart of stone. The book documents the history of the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals and its founder, Maria Dickin. Dickin created her eponymously named Dickin Medal in 1943, awarded to animals in war who have shown gallantry or devotion to duty. The book lists the 63 recipients of the award right up to a Labrador named Treo in 2010 who located a 'daisy chain' IED, saving countless lives. There is at least a précis saying why each medal was awarded, including several detailed histories too. The bravery displayed by these animals is truly astonishing. Dogs rescuing the blitz-buried and

the torpedoed-drowning and pigeons that battled weather and predators to deliver messages, often hundreds of miles. One, particularly, Searchlight Pied, was trained to land via the beam of a search light and could even ignore the wrong ones too. My only gripe was the author's presentation into loose groupings, I would have preferred to read the awards in chronological order that the services were rendered. Not all the dates of the awards are noted, and some disagree with the PDSA's website. But that aside, this book will lift your heart and make you cry – especially when you read about the poor pigeon that survived the war only to be trodden on by his breeder. **DF**



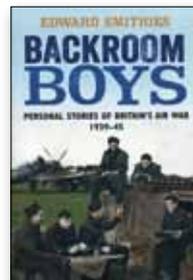
Tracing Your First World War Ancestors:

A Guide for Family Historians

By Simon Fowler
Pen and Sword Family History, £12.99

This does exactly what it says on the cover – it is a well presented reference book with practical advice for tracing your forebears who may have served in the First World War. There are repetitions, which you'd expect, but there are many suggestions to help you track down your ancestor. A couple of surprising inclusions discuss charity workers and European refugees sheltering in England at that time. The work would be improved if the appendix listing the

key websites were more comprehensive. Also the addition of a bibliography of books referred to, would be helpful too. There are numerous typos that litter the book, but other than that, it is a good starter for ten in searching out your grand-relations. **DF**



Backroom Boys

By Edward Smithies
Cassell, £8.99

This is a collection of first-hand stories of ordinary people called up for work in support of the RAF in the Second World War. Personal experiences range from machinists on the shop floor producing aircraft to ground crew maintaining the machines and the pilots, both in the fighter and bomber squadrons, at home and abroad. Some stories are

amusing, some are sad, but the overwhelming attitude that emerges is the sense of importance that people felt, participating in the nation's defence. You also sense their bewilderment in peacetime at no longer fitting in – and then wondering what it was all for, as the lot of most ordinary people didn't greatly improve despite promises made. I found it absolutely fascinating, especially the tales of sabotage of aircraft on UK RAF bases and individual struggles and hardship. One unfortunate woman's health was damaged by toxic material used to manufacture the aircraft she worked on. Then there were the men in reserved occupations who took up arduous after work duties, fire watching and the like, working more than 70 hours without sleep. Incredible dedication and sense of duty for small remuneration. **DF**



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UNITED KINGDOM





NORTHERN IRELAND

An active Army career was all I ever wanted. My father served in the Second World War and both my grandfathers fought in the First World War so I grew up hooked on stories of campaigns; I never gave any other career a second thought.

At 19, straight out of basic training, I asked to join the first regiment due to deploy to Northern Ireland in the summer of 1976. Initially senior officers tried hard to dissuade me, but I was adamant that I wanted to go.

The tour was lively and there wasn't a day without an incident of some sort. On the afternoon of the 12 August, an Orange March degenerated into riot. The next day, our regiment had hit the front page of every national newspaper. It concerned my parents and looking back, it was all quite dramatic but I was so new to Army life that I took it in my stride. The regiment had very few Englishmen and, as a potential officer – and a Southern one at that – I had quite a hard time, but many of the lads remain firm friends to this day. I'm convinced those days served me in good stead; I was commissioned three years later and went on to command a commando battery. But 16 Regiment was my apprenticeship and hopefully those once wild, young Jocks are proud of me. It was the foundation for my Army career and everything I have done since.



KURDISTAN

Towards the end of the first Gulf War, the Iraqi Kurds rebelled against Saddam which resulted in the Iraqi army carrying out an operation of ethnic cleansing in the north. Under a humanitarian mission, Operation Haven, the Commando Brigade flew into Turkey to prepare with



MY MEDALS

Joining the army in 1975, Chris Cobb-Smith has the rare distinction of serving on operations as a regular, reservist and civilian.

an international force to move into Iraq. At this time, as a major in the regulars, I was commanding 8 Alma Commando Battery.

The Kurds had died in their thousands and our mission was split between military deterrence and providing humanitarian aid. We pushed the Iraqi army back out of Kurdistan beyond a pre-agreed line following them forward as they moved back. Although it was occasionally kinetic the main threat was the minefields that caused a number of allied casualties. The other half of our force was in the mountains trying to locate the Kurds to persuade them that it was safe to return to their villages. We saw awful cases of frostbite injuries among these terrified and starving refugees returning to find their villages were destroyed and looted. During the five month period we ferried rations of rice, flour, cooking oil

and blankets. For this tour, I was awarded a bar for my General Service Medal previously awarded for Northern Ireland. It was a demanding tour as this sort of mission hadn't really been conducted before, but it one of the most satisfying deployments I've done.



UN SPECIAL SERVICE MEDAL

My United Nations Special Service Medal is unusual in that it was issued for working with the weapons inspection teams in Iraq. The Baghdad Monitoring and Verification Centre supported scientists and monitors tasked with the search for alleged concealed proscribed weapons or weapons of mass destruction as it became known.

For three years I acted as the interface with the

intelligence services, based at the UN HQ, New York, We planned missions day by day, looking at locations, conducting searches while coordinating closely with the Iraqi authorities.

By then I had left the regular army and was seconded to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office; they awarded me a medal anyway. Of course at this time Saddam was in power and Baghdad was still quite safe that we would happily nip out of the hotel to visit a pizzeria and the teams would regularly go out for dinner. Although we would not venture out alone it was possible to get a taxi down to the souk and explore the city. I have no doubt we were also followed, but in all probability for our own safety. The last thing the Iraqi regime needed was for a UN weapons inspector to be harmed.



KOSOVO

Kosovo was an exceptionally poignant period for me. In 1998 the ethnic cleansing and killings that were taking place in Kosovo were becoming more prevalent in the news and, having left Iraq, I signed up for the FCO's Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission.

An international mission was proposed and monitors were needed on the ground quickly. As the situation was already too severe to deploy civilians, the decision was made to combine servicemen with veterans who had just left the forces.

Issued with pale blue flak jackets and bright orange helmets, we collected the similarly painted 'Snatch' Land Rovers, soon to be christened 'Pumpkins' at Belgrade airport and drove south. Crossing the border from Serbia into Kosovo, the severity of the situation became increasingly clear as we spotted burnt out houses and the occasional destroyed village. Over the next two months the incidents increased and the larger international

force of observers deployed. In January 1999, there was a massacre in the village Racak, an incident that marked the significant deterioration in the situation. Along with my interpreter and a Russian colleague we were the first witnesses on the scene.

A day earlier, we were called out to reports of fighting in the area but the Serbian military kept us at a distance. The sound of heavy fighting together with the evacuation of a number of injured women, children and old men for a day and a night foretold the drama was to unfold. It wasn't until the following morning that we had access to the village and I was ordered to investigate. The entire village was clearly traumatised, and a stunned young rebel fighter silently led me to a gully containing the heap of bodies.

I was very aware that the area was still extremely

dangerous and that the Serbs could come in at any time to secure the evidence. No sooner had I radioed back a report, than the media started to arrive. It was good that the scene was quickly documented but I told them, "We don't know exactly what has happened here so we shouldn't jump to any conclusions," though the conclusion was perhaps obvious. My concerns about another attack were confirmed later that day when, along with the media, we fled the village under fire as the Serbian forces attacked again.



AFGHANISTAN

By 2007 I could feel age creeping on and I saw Afghanistan as my final chance to deploy. By then I had formed a small firm providing safety consultants for the major

news networks who deploy teams to areas of conflict. This relationship with the media led to my attachment to an Army Reserve unit, the Media Operations Group. In March 2008 I was assigned to the Media Operations staff at the ISAF HQ in Kabul. It is no secret that staff work has never been my 'forte' and this, along with the realisation that my experience with news teams in the field could be capitalised upon, I was put in charge of all the 'image techs' the videographer and photographers in the HQ. This coincided with the decision to accrue a library of images and footage to support the Commander's messages, so I was tasked to form a strategic combat camera facility. The team's role was to produce stock photos and film imagery whether it was water, food, wheat or to illustrate the 'Afghan first' policy. Obviously

real operations come first, but we managed to scrounge seats in helicopters, on planes and in convoys to get out to the locations to achieve our tasks.

Assigned a US photographer and videographer, our first task was to get stock footage at the Kajaki dam and FOB Gibraltar prior to the operation to move and install a new turbine. That mission led us to being stranded there for 10 days but we were generously hosted by the Paras, who we accompanied on regular patrols.

At 52, it's fair to say that my presence caused a few raised eyebrows. On one memorable occasion, with bullets flying overhead I jumped for cover and found myself sharing a ditch with a 19-year-old Para who immediately teased me. I told him, "Look you cheeky sod, how do you fancy still doing this in 30 years time?" His answer? "No bloody chance Sir!"



"Lords or Wimbledon?"

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favourites



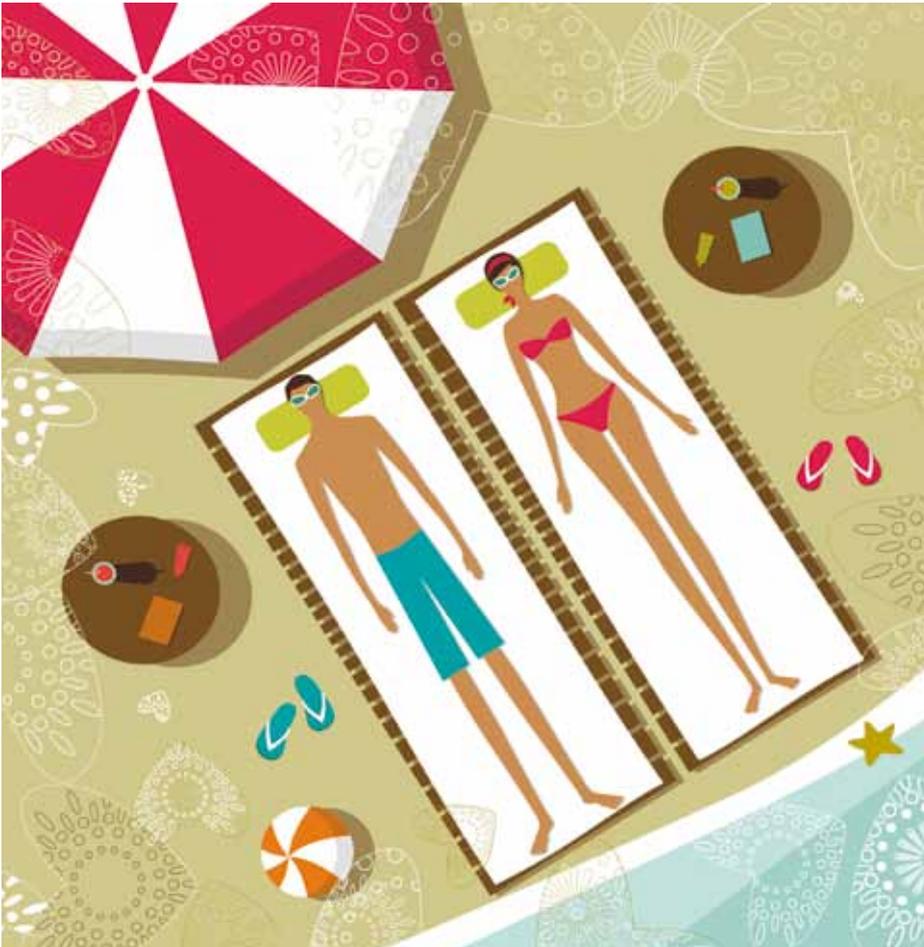
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TOP TRAVEL TIPS

'BE PREPARED' ISN'T JUST A MOTTO FOR BOY SCOUTS. FOLLOW NICK IMM'S ADVICE FOR TIPTOP HOLIDAY HEALTH



By Surgeon Commander Nick Imm, a GP at Navy Command HQ, HMS *Excellent*.

Hello from HMS *Excellent*, on Whale Island in Portsmouth.

I hope you've been enjoying the good weather. It's that time of year again so I thought we'd talk about holiday health this month. Here are my top seven tips:

■ **Vaccinations:** check with your practice nurse before you travel and take a look at this useful website: www.nathnac.org/travel/ There is loads of practical information on illnesses such as malaria and recent disease outbreaks,

as well as a country-by-country breakdown of vaccination requirements. Even if you're military and are up to date for all your Service vaccinations, you may just find that some countries do require extra jabs.

■ **Travel insurance:** this is vital as medical costs and travel expenses can be very high. If you're in the Services check that your insurance covers cancellation of your holiday for military reasons – such as a short notice deployment.

■ **EHIC card:** if you're travelling in the EU don't forget your European Health Insurance Card. It's free (although some dubious websites will try to charge you for processing it – avoid them). You'll be covered for free or subsidised emergency healthcare in participating countries. If you already have one, check

the expiry date as the cards do need renewing after a set period of time.

■ **Sunblock:** you'll notice that there are two types of protection offered by sun creams and sprays: ultraviolet A and B. Basically, the UVA filter protects against the ageing effects of the sun while the UVB filter protects against burning. The more you expose yourself to the sun, the more you increase your risk of skin cancer in the future. Paler skins burn more easily and skin cancer is more likely to occur, but even people with very dark skin do die from skin cancer. Buy a high UVB factor sunscreen with 5-star UVA protection – and buy before you go as sun block can cost much more overseas. Avoid sun exposure during the middle of the day and wear a hat to protect your head and face.

■ **First aid kit:** it's always a good idea to pack a first aid kit. You can get pre-prepared ones from a pharmacy or make your own. Useful items are rehydration sachets, anti-diarrhoea pills, antihistamines, insect repellent and plasters. If you need to take your own prescribed medicines (especially strong painkillers or injected medicines) consider asking your practice for a letter of explanation for customs.

■ **Safe sex:** people tend to be more likely to have casual sex on holiday. Even if this seems a somewhat remote possibility it's a good idea to pack some condoms – of a brand you know and trust. It just makes sense.

■ **Safe water:** in countries with poor sanitation you can reduce your risk of getting a diarrhoeal illness by not drinking the tap water or using it to brush your teeth. Instead, only drink water that has been bottled, boiled or chemically treated. You can also buy chemical disinfectants and filters from travel shops.

I hope all this hasn't put you off your holiday. It's really important to get away and recharge – just stay safe and healthy and I'll see you next month. **DF**

■ This is general advice only. If you have any medical concerns please see your medic or GP.

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Breakdown Cover



SUDOKU

4			7	2		1		
		4			2		7	
				3		6		
			4	1		7	9	
1								8
2	7		9	8				
	5		1					
3		7		6				
	1		7	9				3

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

2	3	9	8	6	5	4	7	1
1	6	4	2	3	7	8	9	5
5	7	8	9	4	1	6	3	2
4	2	7	1	5	8	9	6	3
9	1	6	3	7	2	5	8	4
3	8	5	4	9	6	1	2	7
6	5	3	7	8	4	2	1	9
8	9	2	5	1	3	7	4	6
7	4	1	6	2	9	3	5	8

Solution to the July 2013 puzzle

CHESS



Compiled by: Carl Portman

I always find it highly amusing when companies use chess to advertise their service or product. Usually this is some spurious (and illegal) position with the word 'strategy' accompanying it. Garry Kasparov once wrote that strategy is the end, but tactics are the means, and I could not agree more. Tactics win games more often than not, and in business you can have all the strategies you like but it is tactics that get you where you want to be. Sun Tzu wrote that strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory and tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.

It is recommended by many a grandmaster that we apply ourselves to studying tactics every day – just a few positions at breakfast will get the brain racing. As for actually playing the game you might do well to observe Austrian Rudolf Spielmann's view that we should play the opening like a book, the middlegame like a magician and the endgame like a machine.

Whatever the view make sure you



are prepared before you sit down at the board or you will be found out. Again, in the immortal words of Mr Kasparov, never bring a knife to a gunfight.

Study the position below from the game Davies-Hartman, Wrexham 1995. The black king is exposed but how did white capitalise to checkmate black in three moves?

Send your answers to me at carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk please.

The answer to July's problem was 1. Rc8 Rxc8 2. Qe7!! Winning beautifully. The winner will be announced. June's winner was Olga Blinova.

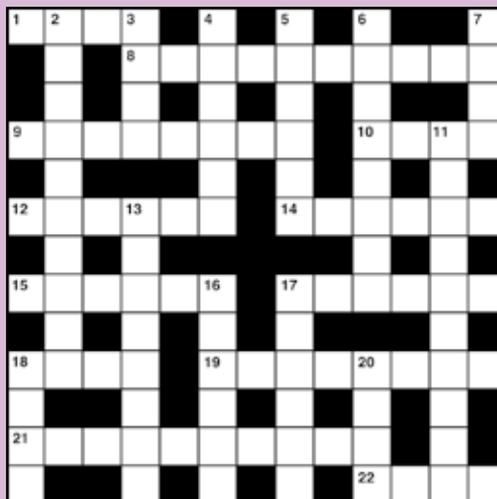
TOPICAL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. Cotton or silk garment worn by Indian women (4)
8. Capital of the US state of California (10)
9. Ugly buildings (8)
10. Horses eat these (4)
12. Director of 19 Across (6)
14. See 11 Down
15. The Olympic Games were held in this country in 2004 (6)
17. Eight pints (6)
18. Person who dyes cloth (4)
19. *Love _____*, a romantic comedy starring Hugh Grant, Colin Firth and Emma Thompson (8)
21. Incapable of making mistakes (10)
22. Light toboggan (4)

DOWN

2. 2013 Wimbledon men's singles champion (4,6)
3. Local name for the River Thames at Oxford (4)



4. In Greek mythology, he flew too close to the sun (6)
5. Topeka is the capital of this US state (6)
6. Device which can lift or control a plane in flight (8)
7. Bruce Springsteen is known as 'The _____' (4)
11. And 14 Across. Veteran rockers who

13. And 17 Down. Leonardo DiCaprio stars in this 2013 movie (3,5,6)
16. Electronic messages (6)
17. See 13 Down
18. Raised platform for a speaker (4)
20. Biblical figure killed by his brother Cain (4)

SOLUTION (NO PEEKING)

- Across**
1. Sari 8. Sacramento
 9. Eyesores 10. Oats 12. Curtis
 14. Stones 15. Greece
 17. Gallon 18. Dyer 19. Actually
 21. Infallible 22. Luge
- Down**
2. Andy Murray 3. Isis 4. Icarus
 5. Kansas 6. Aerofoil 7. Boss
 11. The Rolling 13. The Great
 16. emails 17. Gatsby
 18. Dais 20. Abel

PRIZE

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COTSWOLDS CHIC

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Wyck Hill House, a bespoke hotel, also makes an ideal base for exploring the many attractions of the Cotswolds, including Stow-on-the-Wold, Bourton-on-the-Water, Broadway and Chipping Campden. To book call 01451 831 936 or visit www.wyckhillhousehotel.co.uk

TO WIN

Email your name, address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 16 September 2013. Don't forget to enter Wyck Hill House in the subject line.

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PRIZE

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The strobe feature can be operated when the torch is off by simply pushing the mode button down. This then doubles as an excellent deterrent to any intruder.

For more on this model or to see the full range, visit www.olightworld.co.uk. For sales of this or any other

Olight product, go to www.heinnie.com or email: sales@heinnie.com. Tel: 033 0300 0400.

TO WIN

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